and finally an old Indian appeared, accompanied by an Indian woman of about thirty and five small children, one of them still of nursing age. They were followed by two stout youths.

Needless to say, all the Indians we encountered in those parts -- men and women, elders, youth and children -- were altogether naked.

We recognized without difficulty that this family belonged to the Mundurucu tribe, for the young woman, the youths and the old man were all painted on the face, the chest and the rest of the body with the losenges and other figures characteristic of the tribe. [77]

The old Mundurucu, certainly more than seventy years old and already nearly deaf, received us with indifference, as did the two youths. The young woman and the children seemed transfixed with surprise and fright.

There we stopped and spent the night.

II

Journey from the headwaters of the Caderari to the village of Necodemus on the plains

At dawn of the next day we set out from the headwaters of the Caderari, where we left our canoe, and followed a narrow and tortuous trail through the heart of the ancient forest, past warm rotten trunks that seemed still covered with the slime of a primeval flood. One of the two youths served as our guide.

We had not traveled far when we heard the barking of dogs and soon afterwards came upon a very handsome youth of sixteen or seventeen. On seeing us he did not express the slightest surprise; on the contrary, his smiling face lit up with childlike happiness.

It was as though he had been expecting us and we had been friends of long standing, for he immediately took the lead of our group and guided us to his hut which stood to one side of the road on the bank of a pretty brook. The hut was roofed and enclosed with palm fronds; ten fat dogs heralded a house of plenty.

291 §41 Although they go entirely naked, they carefully avoid any postures which might appear indecent, and this to such an extent that no one notices it when they go through those trying periods peculiar to their sex.

152 593 I shall now relate one of the instances of jealousy, for I believe that such first-hand episodes provide a more vivid picture of the uses, customs and feelings of a people than any general description might do.

The Indian girl Sebastiana, already referred to above, was married in Acupari. One day a young man came to her and said "Leave your husband, who is not a good hunter, and come with me to another village." At that very moment the husband appeared, came to her, and asked her what the young man had said. 684 The girl, embarrassed, did not know what to answer, and her husband seized a bow and chastised her severely. Yet [114] this couple were always close and loved each other, until the unfortunate circumstances which threatened her mother forced Sebastiana to flee Acupari, leaving her husband behind.

555 573 Families are very united; fathers and mothers alike are extremely fond of their children, and will face the greatest dangers to help and protect them.

I have seen sick children treated with the greatest care and dedication in the large village houses.

69 When a Munduruc mentions another member of his tribe, he always uses the same expression -- "a kinsman of ours" -- to distinguish him from members of other tribes.

When these barbarians happen to meet outside their villages, in the midst of a forest or on the banks of a stream, they easily recognize each other by the paintings and tattoo marks peculiar to their tribe.

302 Munduruc body painting is a remarkable thing. The designs are traced with great skill by consummate artists.

[30] On the face and chest, miniature lozenges are drawn to perfection. The back part of the body is covered with parallel lines from the neck nearly down to the heels; the breasts, the buttocks, and the female sexual parts are painted with fanciful designs which are identical for members of the same sex.

tattooed or there was in the middle of the face a semielliptical, blue-black spot from which numerous, parallel lines extended over the chin and lower jaw down to the breast. From the middle of one shoulder to the other, two or three lines half an inch apart run across the broad chest. Under these there are vertically placed diamonds, some filled in, some left in outline to the end of the chest. The rest of the torso is adorned similarly though not so completely and the same lines are repeated on the extremities with or without the diamonds. Variations are introduced according to individual taste. Among women the whole face is rarely blackened, they have only a malha, a crescent shape, the pointed horns of which are turned upward. Their [388] ears are pierced, not in the lobe, but at the top in the first fold and they wear cane pegs in the holes. The face of these people is wide, with a low forehead shadowed by the hair which is cut straight across, the facial features marked, coarse and expressive of good nature. The eyes are always dark and not so slanted as the eyes of Indians of the more southerly tribes. The nose is large, often somewhat curved, not so short and blunt, with flaring nostrils, like those we have noticed among the Indians of eastern Brazil. Their heads are covered with thick, shining black hair which turns gray among the Mundrucus only late and then only in individual cases. I have never seen among them, any more than among any other Indians, an old man who was white-headed. In the wilds they are unclothed except that the men wear a jock strap [Suspensorium] of cotton or a tacanhoba. The women I saw were wholly naked, even in the mission, and to get an apron on them for church was a matter of some difficulty. The Mundrucus and their neighbors, the Mauwes, with whom they are friendly, are, like the Apiacas, skilled in the art of spinning cotton thread and weaving hammocks which they hang outside their huts on hot nights. To catch fish they usually poison the water in which the fish are found.* They make

*They do this in ponds or dammed up brooks by stirring the crushed twigs and leaves of the timbo (Paullinia pinnata) into the water until it turns dark and foams. The fish, and even crocodiles, come to the surface belly up, stupefied or dead and the fish are eaten. The water is extremely poisonous.

4: Horton E-4 (no date) 1948
SQ13 Mundurucu SQ13

Within the house each family has its own partitioned quarters and a fireplace or stone manioc oven (Tocantins, 1877). How many families usually occupy a single house has not been reported. 342

CLOTHING AND ADORNMENT

The only item of *Mundurucú* clothing mentioned in the literature is the three-cornered penis cover suspended from a cotton cord, but there are several descriptions of the ceremonial feather garments for which this tribe is famous. Many authors consider the *Mundurucú* to have been the most expert featherworkers in South America within the historic period. 291 ●

Featherwork.—Featherwork includes aprons, capes (attached to headdresses), caps, diadems, belts, girdles, bandoliers, arm bands, and leg bands. The feathers used in this craft were at least in part obtained from birds kept in captivity; red, blue, green, and yellow feathers were carefully sorted by color and size and stored in baskets or in palm-stem cylinders. Martius was told that the *Mundurucú* were able to cause their parrots to grow yellow plumes by plucking their feathers and rubbing frogs' blood into the wounds.[8] The feathers are attached to a net fabric. Tail feathers, arranged in parallel rows, are used in capes and pendants; rosettes of small feathers, bound at the quills, are attached to the base net to cover the attachments of long feathers; imbricated breast feathers may be used to cover the surface of a fabric or to sheathe a cord. Decorative effects are produced by simple alternation of colors. 287 [225]

A characteristic feathered staff is described as a stem of cane or wood about 3 feet (1 m.) long and 2 or 3 inches in diameter. The shaft is either covered with long feathers laid flat against it or sheathed with fine breast feathers. At the upper end a dense band of rosettes forms a projecting collar; a free cluster of long plumes may project from the head of the staff. The feathers are attached with wax and cotton thread. These objects are highly valued and when not in use are carefully stored in cylindrical containers. Their significance has not been reported; Martius merely says that when he approached a *Mundurucú* village, staff-bearers came to meet him. 295

Tattooing and painting.—The *Mundurucú* tattooing designs consist of fine, widely-spaced parallel lines applied vertically on limbs and torso; bands of lozenges across the upper part of the chest; occasional parallel horizontal lines, and cross-hatchings. Around each eye is tattooed a single-line ellipse; curved lines are drawn around the mouth. Lines converging toward the edge across the cheeks give the appearance of wings spread across the face. (For illustrations of *Mundurucú* tattooing, see the sketches by Hercules Florence (Stevens, 1939).) 304

[8] Tschudi (1868 b, p. 207) says of this custom, which has been reported from other South American tribes, that the color change actually occurs, but ornithologists attribute the change to dietary factors.

439 Munduruca traded chiefly in manioc flour and wild products, and rubber was of secondary importance. Chandless' observation [1862, p. 277] that in 1861 the Munduruca of the upper Tapajós "trade in sales and sell provisions to the parties of Indiarubber makers" indicates that important trade in articles other than rubber continued at least until 1861. Shortly after this date, however, the tempo of rubber extraction in the Amazon quickened, and in 1875, as Tocantins' account shows [1877, pp. 151-154], rubber was the most important Munduruca product.

M 439 With the advent of the rubber trade, Munduruca acculturation entered its second stage. During the first, when trade in manioc flour and certain wild products predominated, the hereditary chief mediated between the traders and his people, aboriginal social patterns were largely unchanged, and warfare was still vigorously prosecuted, frequently under the sponsorship of traders and colonial authorities. During the second stage, which lasted until 1924, warfare ceased, the size of villages increased owing to migration and European-introduced diseases, and the position of the hereditary chief was weakened by the imposition of appointed "chiefs". The period was characterized by a "loosening" of integration rather than by a change in mode of integration, or structure.

221 Work in the rubber avenues in the latter half of the nineteenth century did 349 not upset the annual subsistence cycle as much as might be expected. Whereas many people had formerly left their villages during the dry season to hunt and fish along the streams, they now left to collect rubber. As in times past, they cleared their garden sites before leaving and returned to the village in time to burn them over and plant. The necessity to provide all their own subsistence limited the rubber producing season to three months, mid-June to mid-September, out of a possible seven. This parallels closely the earlier phases of Northeastern Algonkian fur production, when the Indian's need to obtain European supplies by aboriginal cooperative techniques limited fur production and conflicted with their increasing desire for Western manufactures [Leacock 1954, pp. 25-27].

434 During the nineteenth century (and to the present day) the Munduruca, like 177 the Algonkians and in fact most aboriginal tribes, have been acquiring a seemingly insatiable appetite for the utilitarian wares and trinkets of civilization. Firearms increased their efficiency in warfare and hunting, especially the abundant hunting carried on during the rubber season when one or two families lived in [324] isolation adjacent to their rubber trees. In communal hunts, the game could be surrounded and the range and velocity of the weapons were not as crucial to success. Other items, too, became necessities to the Munduruca. Contrary to popular belief that nudity is beneficial to tropical peoples, there are various reasons why clothing is desirable in the Amazon. Insect stings greatly annoy the Indians, and at night the temperature drops to from 55° to 60° F. Clothing, however, is expensive, and only in recent years has it been used extensively [24] in some Munduruca villages. The movement toward covering the body entailed the development within two generations of a sense of shame comparable to that of Europeans. The Munduruca, especially the women, have also acquired a desire for finery for the sake of display. They have also developed a taste for many strictly non-utilitarian goods, such as the Brazilian rum they now use and the beads and ornaments purveyed by the trader.

A full and adequate description of the growth of Munduruca dependence upon trade would require a separate treatise, for reliance upon manufactured goods reflected further dependence upon many elements of these goods. For example, firearms required powder and lead, while garments of factory-woven cloth had to be made and repaired with scissors, thread, and needles. The substitution of metal [46] pots for native ones of clay and of manufactured hammocks for the native product 323] has reached the point where many young women now in not even too to make these articles. The Munduruca barely remember that their forebears used stone axes and native knives, and they would be helpless without the copper tearing pot used to make manioc flour.

11: Murphy E.5 (1952-1953) 1958
SQ13 Munduruca SQ13

tribe in general and the extended family in particular. Also, although the men's houses are still built according to the traditional pattern, the dwellings are now built on a rectangular floor plan in contrast to the older elliptical shape.

Modification of the traditional Munduruca village is even more striking on the shores of the Curuca River. Some villages number almost 100 inhabitants, but others are tiny hamlets of two small houses, none has the men's house. All dwellings face toward the river, but there is no over-all village plan. The houses are constructed of wattle and daub and, but for a few distinctively Munduruca characteristics, are much like those of the Neo-Brazilian population. This conformity to the architecture of the whites' is even greater on the Tapajós River, where the Munduruca live in single-family isolation.

The decline of Munduruca culture is also evident in the physical appearance and dress of the people. All now wear the cheap cotton shirts and trousers or Mother Hubbard dresses sold to them by the traders. The more traditional men of the upper Curuca villages generally wear penis sheath and back belt beneath this raiment and usually hunt in the latter accoutrements only. The elaborate body and facial tattooing that were formerly the hallmark of all Munduruca, both male and female, is also on the wane. It is common now to see young people who are half tattooed, or who have only the first few lines, never completed because of the lapse of the practice.

History

The current demotion of Munduruca culture is not unexpected. On the contrary, it is remarkable that the Munduruca have preserved as much, and that they still have a communitarian society after more than a century and a half of continuous peaceful relations with the whites. They arrived late on the Amazon historical scene, and were not noted in published reports until 1796.[1] Whether the Munduruca reported at that time were the members of a war party or had migrated from their home territory is uncertain, for they were seen far to the north of the upper Tapajós country on the Nhamundá River, a tributary of a channel of the Madeira River named the Paraná Mirim. But their center of strength remained roughly in their present habitat, and they fought a colonial military detachment in that region in 1795.[2] Their defeat at the hands of government troops ended more than two decades of Munduruca raids upon the Portuguese settlements of the Amazon and ushered in a period of peaceful relations and active alliance with the whites.

Subsequent to their pacification, large numbers of Munduruca drifted into the vicinity of the growing towns and missions on the lower Madeira and Tapajós rivers. The missions are of especial interest to the subject matter of this study. In 1803 the mission of Santa Cruz was established on the lower Tapajós River

[1] The term "white" as applied herein to the Neo-Brazilian population of the Amazon is used as a shorthand way of saying "people bearing a local variant of Luso-Brazilian culture, and who identify themselves with Brazilian society." Actually, the local people represent varying degrees of Caucasoid, Negroid, and Negroid admixture.

[2] Ferreira Penna, 1885.

[3] Almeida Serra, 1860, pp. 6-8.

11: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1958
SQ13 Munduruca SQ13

142
291
304
301

A Young Munduruca man. Note tattooed vertical lines on arm and contrasting use of cut plugs and arm bands. The houses of Cabruca are in the background.

[348]

A Munduruca woman gathered in the ceremonial shed to attach [illegible] to cords.

[end plate 2]

12: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
SQ13 Mundurucu SQ13

try of the Tapajós River. To the north, the terrain is covered by dense rain forest, but south of the Munduruc country are great stretches of savannah that continue into the Planalto de Mato Grosso. Their distinct preference for unforested village locales could only have been acquired in their present home or further south. The previously mentioned cultural characteristics suggest the latter, although I can at present offer no further corroboration of this possibility.

Although the Munduruc regard their traditional homeland as the area of mixed gallery forest and savannah between the Curuir and Tropas rivers, only about 300 of the 1,250 surviving Indians live there. Another 700 live along the banks of the Curuir itself, and approximately 200 on the Tapajós River and tributary streams. The person in search of the exotic would be surely disappointed at his first contact with the Munduruc. They dress in Western style garments, albeit ill-fitting and ragged, and they adorn themselves with glass beads, brilliantine, plastic combs, and religious medallions. The five-gallon gasoline can is a far more important artifact than the clay pot, and they cook in aluminum pans. Since the Indian strain is so strong in the genetic make-up of the north Brazilian, the Munduruc do not stand out sharply from their neighbors in physical characteristics. This is especially true of the younger Munduruc who are no longer tattooed from head to foot as their parents were.

The way of life of the Munduruc residents of the Tapajós shore is especially close to that of their Brazilian neighbors. That the fundamental methods of farming and fishing are similar among both populations is not surprising, as north Brazilian subsistence techniques are largely Indian-derived. But beyond that, the Tapajós-River Munduruc live in single-house isolation and not in villages

12:Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
SQ13 Mundurucu SQ13

meters, but during July in the same period an average of only 6.05 mm. fell. The extremes during this seven-year ranged from 530.4 mm. in January, 1947, to no rainfall in July, 1945, and again in 1951. The rivers rise and fall with the rains, overflowing their banks in November or December and receding in May. 132

Contrary to popular belief, the heat is seldom excessive in this part of Brazil. Although the sea breezes that blow up the Amazon from the sea as far as Manaos every evening are not felt in the upper Tapajós, the temperature usually drops at night to very comfortable levels. It was my experience that one could use pajamas and two cotton blankets at night; the Mundurucú, who do not possess such luxuries, generally sleep in their cotton clothes and awaken at three or four in the morning to light a small fire beneath their hammocks. There are no great variations in temperature from one month to another. Days are slightly warmer and nights cooler during the dry season, but the lower humidity makes it more agreeable than the rains. Maximum temperatures throughout the year range between 87° and 95° F. (30° and 35° C.), minimum temperatures between 63° and 77° F. (17° and 25° C.). During June, a cold wind blows from the distant Andes and chills the entire region for two to four days. Temperatures then fall to as low as 63° F. (17° C.). [291] [513]

THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

The Mundurucú habitat is surely not an earthly paradise, but neither is it the "green hell" so often pictured by royalty-minded travelers and writers. The Brazilians of the Tapajós River, however, do live in a social and economic hell. They distinguish themselves from the Indians by the self-designation of *civilizado* or, less often, *cristão* (Christian). The Indian is commonly called *caboclo* by them, 101 648

12: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
SQ13 Mundurucu SQ13

in stock, although everybody knows that this is false." In contrast, they have more confidence in the missionaries and, despite some animosity against the priests, generally concede that they do not deceive their clientele.

The most casual inventory of the possessions of a Cururú household shows that the people there own many more manufactured goods and far fewer articles of native manufacture than the campineiros. Pottery and hammock making are almost forgotten arts, although they are continued by the savannah women. Also, the Cururú woman usually has two old dresses, one fine dress, and one or two slips. Her campineiro sister has only one dress for everyday wear and is extremely lucky to have a slip or a "party" dress. The Cururú men, likewise, have more clothes than the men of the savannahs and attach more importance to sartorial elegance. They also seek to obtain many other items, such as canoes, coffee, and sugar; these are known and appreciated by the campineiro but are not within his means, and are not yet viewed by him as necessities.

Concomitant with the greater demand for manufactured articles has been an increase of the prestige of Western culture in the eyes of the Cururú people. They want these articles for their utility more than do the campineiros, and a positive value is attached to their use. But it is chiefly the overt and material aspects of the outside world that entice the Mundurucú. The resistance of their children to the teaching of the Portuguese language, reading, and arithmetic at the mission and Indian Service schools is remarkable. And although Christianity is not actively rejected, the people are not deeply affected by the missionary teachings. The words of the priests are accredited and respected without any commitment or great interest on the part of their listeners. Not even those Mundurucú who have been reared by the missionaries and have lived at